

**City of Reading City Council  
Regular Business Meeting  
Monday, January 9, 2012**

Council President Francis G. Acosta called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given by Pastor Danny Moore, Holy Trinity Church

All present pledged to the flag.

**ATTENDANCE**

Council President Acosta

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, District 2

Councilor Sterner, District 3

Councilor Reed, District 5

Councilor Waltman, District 6

Mayor V. Spencer

Managing Director C. Geffken

City Auditor D. Cituk

City Solicitor C. Younger

City Clerk L. Kelleher

Council President Acosta announced that Councilor Marmarou needed to leave after the Committee of Whole meeting due to another commitment.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Council President Acosta announced that three (3) citizens were registered to address Council on agenda matters. He reminded the speakers of the public speaking rules.

**Mike Shoumlinsky, of Primrose Lane, Sinking Spring**, stated that he is President of Local 1803 IAFF, and expressed the belief that the Administration's proposal to reappoint the Fire Chief is in violation of the State Pension Act. He distributed a copy of the DCED Municipal Pension Handbook noting that the Handbook says that fire or police employees receiving a pension can only return to same City if they are an elected official.

**Juan Zabala, of North Front Street**, spoke in support of Jim McHale for appointment to the District 1 Council seat. He also spoke in opposition of the proposed increase to the Fire Chief's salary.

**Merlin Planer, James Avenue**, stated that he is a member of Local IAFF 1803 and serves on the Fire Pension Board. He explained that the DROP is a planning tool for replacing retiring

police and firefighters. He stated that the DROP program is irrevocable after a police officer or firefighter submits the final DROP forms. He explained that when entering the five (5) year DROP program pension payments are deferred to a special account and payment is made after the firefighter or police officer retires at the end of the five (5) year period. He expressed the belief that reappointing the Fire Chief will jeopardize the Chief's pension, as it will violate the State Pension Act.

## **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MINUTES**

Council President Acosta called Council's attention to the agenda for this meeting and the minutes for the December 27<sup>th</sup> regular meeting of Council. He noted the following changes to the agenda:

- Moving Resolution A, exonerating taxes for Pansy Street to Introduction to New Ordinances
- Adding an introduction of an ordinance regarding NorthFolk Southern easement
- Adding a resolution regarding appointing Francis Acosta to the Recreation Commission
- Withdrawing an ordinance for the Fire Chief's salary
- Withdrawing an ordinance for the Community Development Director salary

**Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to approve the minutes from the December 27<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of Council and the agenda, as amended. The motion was approved unanimously.**

## **Consent Agenda**

**B. Resolution 3–2012** authorizing conditional offers of employment to 25 police officers for the Reading Police Department (**Man Dir and Police Chief**) *To be distributed Monday*

**C. Resolution 4–2012** authorizing the disposition of Financial Interest Statements for 2004 (**Council Staff**)

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

Mayor Spencer highlighted the report distributed to Council at the meeting covering the following:

- Requesting the reopening of the 2012 Budget
- Noting the Transition's teams review of the City's current operations
- Hiring of Craig Pfeiffer as Zoning Administrator
- Requesting reports from Codes regarding the City's housing

## **AUDITOR'S REPORT**

City Auditor Cituk read the report distributed to Council at the meeting covering the following:

- Noting the Pension Board meetings for 2012
- Update on future reports

## **REPORT OF BOARDS, AUTHORITIES, and COMMISSIONS**

Ernie Schlegel, President of the Reading Public Library Board, noted the Library's success under the duress of financial constraints. He noted that the success is due to the Library's great staff and leadership. He stated that the Library Board has begun fundraising and reducing the operating hours at the various branches to cope with the Library's dwindling contributions from a variety of sources. He noted that the awards received by the Library are due to outstanding services and programs. He updated Council on the repair projects made during 2011 and the projects plan for 2012. He stated a project valued at \$984K is planned for the main branch at 5<sup>th</sup> and Franklin Streets. He stated that the CDBG budget contains approximately \$750K for funding this project. The remaining funding will be sought from a variety of sources. He also noted the Library's desire to transfer ten (10) employees currently under the City to employ under the Library system. He suggested that citizens and Council view the Library's Facebook and Web pages. He also asked Council to consider enacting a Library tax during 2012.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz thanked Mr. Schlegel and the Library Boards work to navigate through this difficult time. She noted that the Library provides excellent service to the entire community. She also agreed with the need for Council to evaluate the Library tax.

## **ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE**

There were no ordinances for final passage at this meeting.

## **INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES**

Council President Acosta read the following ordinances into the record:

**A. Ordinance** - amending the 2011 City of Reading General Fund budget by authorizing the transfer of funds from the Sewer Minor Capital Equipment budget to the Contracted Services and Interdepartmental Direct Costs budgets (**Business Analyst**)

**B. Ordinance** - amending the 2011 City of Reading Self Insurance Fund Budget by authorizing the transfer of funds from line items within the Self Insurance Fund Budget (**Human Resources**)

**C. Ordinance** - amending the City of Reading Codified Ordinances by creating a new Section 1-125 regarding the Council District Boundaries, as recommended by the

Redistricting Committee (**Council Staff/Law**)

**D. Ordinance** - setting forth the salary of the Chief of the Department of Fire and Rescue Services at \$80,000 annually (**Man Dir**) - **WITHDRAWN**

**E. Ordinance** - establishing a four-way stop intersection at the North Fourth and Oley Streets in the City of Reading, Pennsylvania (**Law**)

**F. Ordinance** - changing Division Street between Buttonwood and Schiller Streets in the City of Reading, Pennsylvania, from one-way southbound to two-way traffic direction (**Law**)

**G. Ordinance** - re-enacting and affirming the Public Participation Regulations in §1-119 of the Administrative Code (**Council Staff**)

**H. Ordinance** - amending the City of Reading Codified Ordinances §1-115. Meetings to be Public, by adding language regarding the Use of Electronic Recording Devices (**Council Staff**)

**I. Ordinance** - setting forth the salary of the Director of the Department of Community Development at \$80,000 annually (**Man Dir**) - **WITHDRAWN**

**J. Ordinance** - amending Chapter 5, Code Enforcement of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Reading by adding Alleys, Recycling Storage and the Food Code to existing Quality of Life Violations and amending language regarding Waste/Trash Storage Times and in the Current Fines and Penalties Section (**Law**)

**K. Ordinance** – authorizing the exoneration of outstanding City Property tax, penalties, and interest for 2011 for 412 Pansy Street

**L. Ordinance** – authorizing an easement for North Folk Southern

## **RESOLUTIONS**

**Resolution 5–2012** - reappointing Terry Withers to the Electricians Examining Board (**Admin Oversight**)

**Resolution 6–2012** - reappointing Jonathan Del Collo to the Ethics Board (**Admin Oversight**)

**Resolution 7–2012** - appointing Wynton Butler to the Reading Area Water Authority  
(Admin Oversight)

**Resolution 8–2012** – appointing Francis Acosta to the Recreation Commission

**Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to adopt Resolutions 5-2012, 6-2012, 7-2012, and 8-2012.**

Councilor Reed described the appointment process and the qualifications of the candidates. She stated that this recommendation is endorsed by the Administrative Oversight Committee.

**Resolution 5-2012 – 8-2012 was adopted by the following vote:**

**Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Reed, Sterner, Waltman – 5**

**Nays: None - 0**

## **COUNCIL COMMENT**

None.

**Councilor Reed moved, seconded by Councilor Sterner, to adjourn the regular meeting of Council.**

*Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk*